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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/942,642

08/31/2001

Yoshiya Okamoto

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7590

08/28/2006

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

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WASHINGTON, DC 20005

EXAMINER

AKINTOLA, OLABODE

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3624

DATE MAILED: 08/28/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/942,642	Applicant(s) OKAMOTO ET AL.	
	Examiner Olabode Akintola	Art Unit 3624	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 August 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>4/23/03; 8/9/05; 11/4/05</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

The specification is objected to because of the following informalities: the specification is not in proper idiomatic English and in compliance with 37 CFR 1.52(a) and (b). A substitute specification in proper idiomatic English and in compliance with 37 CFR 1.52(a) and (b) is required. The substitute specification filed must be accompanied by a statement that it contains no new matter. The specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant is respectfully requested to correct any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification. For examination purposes, claims are interpreted as best understood by the examiner.

Abstract

Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The claims are generally narrative and indefinite, failing to conform with current U.S. practice. They appear to be a literal translation into English from a foreign document and are replete with grammatical and idiomatic errors.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stout, Jr. et al (USPN 5878404) (Stout) in view of Szlam (USPN 6868395) (Szlam).

Re claim 1-5, 8-12: Stout teaches a method of invitation to alteration of a contract of cash loan for consumption for inviting a debtor to alteration of contract contents concerning payment terms, the method comprising the steps of: extracting invitation target customers each satisfying conditions for being a defaulting debtor or a candidate defaulting debtor from all debtors (col. 9, lines 7-10); simulating a payment plan which is to be followed after the alteration to the other contract contents, based on an access from the debtor; and taking a procedure for altering the present contract contents when the debtor consents to the alteration to the new contract contents based on a result of the simulation (col. 6, lines 32-49).

Stout does not explicitly teach the step of notifying each of the extracted debtors, by postal mail or E-mail, of an invitation to alteration of present contract contents to other contract contents which allow relaxation of payment terms, and an address of a Web site at which an application for the alteration of the present contract contents is received. Szlam teaches the step of notifying each of the extracted debtors, by postal mail or E-mail, of an invitation to alteration of present

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contract contents to other contract contents which allow relaxation of payment terms, and an address of a Web site at which an application for the alteration of the present contract contents is received (col. 12, lines 12-34). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Stout to include the aforementioned step as taught by Szlam. One would have been motivated to do as a means of allowing the debtor to respond to the new rate of interest by making an election (Stout: col. 9, lines 39-40).

Re claim 6: Stout teaches the step wherein conditions for extracting each of the invitation target customers during the generation of the reminder data are satisfied when default events by the debtor have occurred a predetermined number of consecutive times or smaller consecutive times, the debtor has lived at an identical address for a predetermined number of years or longer, the debtor has a job, and the debtor is of a predetermined age or older (col. 6, lines 21-23).

Re claim 7: Stout teaches the step wherein in the simulation of the payment plan, a remaining debt curve chart representative of changes in an outstanding loan balance with respect to monthly payment under altered payment terms is also displayed (col. 4, lines 26-43).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Neely (USPN 6044362) discloses electronic invoicing and payment system.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Olabode Akintola whose telephone number is 571-272-3629.

The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30AM -5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vincent Millin can be reached on 571-272-6747. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

OA

CHARLES R. KYLE
PRIMARY EXAMINER

